

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested. By this Amendment, Applicant has canceled claim 11. Thus, claims 1-2 and 5-10 are now pending in the application. In response to the Office Action (Paper No. 10), Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims define patentable subject matter.

Claims 1, 2, 5 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Umeda et al. (USP 5,955,810; hereinafter "Umeda") in view of Csaki (USP 3,603,824) and Sekyra (USP 2,194,620). Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Umeda in view of Csaki, Sekyra and Applicant's admitted prior art (Fig. 18). Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Umeda in view of Csaki, Sekyra and Janette (USP 1,651,059). Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Umeda in view of Csaki, Sekyra and Hyatt, Jr. et al. (USP 5,990,594; hereinafter "Hyatt"). Applicant respectfully traverses the prior art rejections.

In the Amendment filed November 14, 2002, Applicant argued that the combined references do not teach or suggest the claimed "connection portion for connecting said holding assembly terminal and said brush terminal being disposed in said open portion", in accordance with the instructions in your letter of November 11, 2002. Rather, Sekyra discloses that the brush and the holding assembly (casing) are connected inside the holding assembly such that the connection portion for connecting the holding assembly terminal and the brush terminal can not be disposed in the open portion.

In response to the arguments for patentability, the Examiner maintains that the "connecting portion is not an element or a member of the brush assembly ... [, but rather] a location where the holding assembly terminal and the brush terminal are connected together." The Examiner asserts Sekyra (Figure 3) discloses, as claimed, "a holding assembly terminal (24) formed integrally by a resin molding and electrically connected to brush terminal (the portion on the right hand side of the spring 35) mounted to a wire (27) connected to the brushes by a connection member (32) which is disposed in an open portion, and a connection portion for connecting said holding assembly terminal and said brush terminal being disposed in said open portion." Lastly, the Examiner further asserts that "the member [24] can be interpreted as a terminal (a part that forms the end) because member 24 is formed at one end of the brush assembly to hold the brush."

Accordingly, it appears that the Examiner is asserting that the end face of the externally threaded extension 32 of the metal plug 31 (of the casing cap 30) corresponds to the claimed brush terminal, the resin (Bakelite) cover 24 corresponds to the claimed holding assembly terminal, and the threaded extension 32 of the metal plug 31 corresponds to the claimed connection member.

However, as explained in the Amendment filed November 14, 2002, Applicant submits that the cover 24 is not a holding assembly terminal but rather is simply an outer resin shell surrounding the hollow metal core 20 which houses the brush 10. Further, the end face of the externally threaded extension 32 of the metal plug 31 is not a brush terminal. Although claim 1 recites "said holding assembly terminal and a brush terminal ... being electrically connected by a

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connection member", the resin cover 24 is not electrically connected to any portion of the brush assemblage 10.

Nonetheless, Applicant has amended independent claim 1 to incorporate the subject matter of dependent claim 11. Namely, claim 1 now recites "said holding assembly terminal, said brush terminal and said connection member are exposed in said open portion." Applicant submits that this feature of the claimed invention is not taught or suggest by Sekyra since the reference discloses that the brush and the holding assembly (casing) are connected inside the holding assembly such that the holding assembly terminal and the brush terminal can not be disposed in the open portion. Similarly, the other applied references fail to teach or suggest this feature of the present invention.

In addition, Applicant has amended claim 1 to clarify the claim language regarding the brush holding assembly since the Examiner appears to be construing the claim language to require that the holding assembly terminal is formed of a resin molding and is integrally formed with the brush holding assembly. However, as recited in amended claim 1, the holding assembly terminal is not made of resin but rather is made of an electrically conductive material (e.g., metal) since the holding assembly terminal is electrically connected to a battery, and is electrically connected to the brush terminal via the connection member (e.g., screw).

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1, as well as dependent claims 2 and 5-10, should be allowable because the combined references do not teach or suggest all of the features of the claims.

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In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

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PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

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APPENDIX
VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 11 is canceled.

The claims are amended as follows:

1. (Amended) An alternator comprising:
 - a case;
 - a rotor disposed inside said case, said rotor including a rotor coil for generating a magnetic flux on passage of an electric current therethrough, and a plurality of claw-shaped magnetic poles extending in an axial direction and covering said rotor coil, said claw-shaped magnetic poles being magnetized into North-seeking (N) and South-seeking (S) poles by said magnetic flux;
 - a stator including a stator core provided with a plurality of slots formed so as to extend axially and be spaced circumferentially, and a stator winding mounted to said stator core;
 - [brushes] at least one brush for supplying electric current from an electric power supply to said rotor coil;
 - a brush holding assembly secured to said case, said brush holding assembly holding said [brushes] brush within a holding portion and including a cover capable of being opened to remove said [brushes,] brush;
 - a brush terminal electrically connected to said brush; and
 - an open portion for removal and insertion of said [brushes] brush being formed at a position on said case facing said cover,

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wherein said brush holding assembly [is constructed such that] includes a holding assembly terminal [is formed integrally therewith in a resin molding], said holding assembly terminal and [a] said brush terminal [mounted to a wire connected to said brushes being] are electrically connected by a connection member, and [a connection portion for connecting] said holding assembly terminal [and], said brush terminal [being disposed] and said connection member are exposed in said open portion.